

THE HIGH TECH DTV COALITION

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High Tech DTV Coalition: Hard Deadline Key To Free Air Waves For Broadband, Public Safety

'Win-Win' Solution Sought to Protect Consumers

WASHINGTON, D.C., April 27, 2005 – The High Tech DTV Coalition today pledged to work with Congress to create an early date certain for the long-awaited U.S. transition to digital television. The newly formed Coalition, which includes leading trade associations and technology companies, stressed the benefits to first responders, wireless broadband users, rural consumers and the U.S. economy that will be achieved with the rapid completion of the DTV transition.

“Near-term certainty about when the DTV transition will be complete is critical to unleashing the potential of this valuable spectrum at 700 MHz for advanced wireless and public safety applications,” said Janice Obuchowski, the Coalition’s Executive Director. “Congress has anticipated the public interest and economic benefits promised by the DTV transition for nearly 20 years. The time for realizing this broad range of benefits is long past due.”

The Coalition outlined the commitment of its members to work for an early hard date for completion of the DTV transition in letters sent this week to leaders of the House Committee on Energy and Commerce and the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation. The letters emphasized that an early date certain is needed to: (1) Promote growth and protect U.S. leadership in the high tech sector; (2) Extend the reach of broadband services to rural and underserved areas; (3) Provide critical spectrum for enhancing public safety communications systems; (4) Provide new, high quality jobs for U.S. workers; and (5) Provide better consumer options by promoting competition.

The High Tech DTV Coalition believes that providing certainty to the transition will create a “win-win” scenario for all stakeholders. The Coalition’s vision for expediting the DTV transition to become a near term reality – rather than a long deferred goal – includes working with all stakeholders, including broadcasters. The Coalition backs the concept of a program to support availability of converter boxes for households dependent on analog equipment to receive over-the-air television signals.

“This spectrum is ‘beach-front property’ in terms of its potential for broadband wireless services,” said Intel Corporation Chief Executive Officer Craig R. Barrett. “Not only will it lead to viable competition to existing broadband providers, it will also reach far into rural areas, at relatively low cost, giving consumers in underserved areas broadband options that they have never had before.”

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"An early date certain will unleash innovators to develop a broad range of wireless services which exploit unique features of the 700 MHz spectrum," said Dr. Irwin Mark Jacobs, Chairman and CEO of QUALCOMM. "Public safety, enterprises, and consumers will quickly benefit from technology now confined to the drawing boards and at a cost that supports broad public usage."

"What we need is certainty. Certainty will allow us to build business plans that will work and open the doors to capital for entrepreneurs and innovators," said Robert Dotson, President and Chief Executive Officer of T-Mobile USA. "Everyone needs certainty – the public safety responders, wireless carriers, broadband equipment manufacturers, and even the broadcasters. But nobody needs certainty – and clarity – more than consumers."

In the letters sent to leaders and ranking members of the House and Senate committees, the Coalition said, "Adding certainty to the transition process is the key to fulfilling the economic and public welfare benefits of the transition. Certainty will allow the U.S. high tech industry to secure the investment and develop the business plans required to deploy wireless broadband services in the 700 MHz band."

About the High Tech DTV Coalition

The High Tech DTV Coalition includes leading trade associations and companies representing the wireless, computer, telecommunications equipment, semiconductor, software and manufacturing sectors of the U.S. economy. This group of technology leaders advocates an early date certain for the transition to digital television in the United States, through a process that protects consumers, first responders, wireless broadband users and rural wireless users.

The Coalition's members include Alcatel, Aloha Partners, AT&T, Dell, Cisco Systems, IBM, Intel, Microsoft, QUALCOMM, Texas Instruments, T-Mobile, the Information Technology Industry Council, the National Association of Manufacturers, the Business Software Alliance, the Semiconductor Industry Association, the National Telecommunications Cooperative Association and the Rural Telecommunications Group. For more information, contact Mary Greczyn at mg@ftidc.com or 202.393-4531 and John Alden at ja@ftidc.com or 202.371.6793.

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